

## John 2

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### I. 2:1-12 A Wedding in Cana of Galilee

- A. 2:11 *beginning of signs* There are groups that teach that Jesus performed miracles from the time He was a child. To do so, they ignore this verse.
- B. Some go to great lengths to try to show that “wine” in the Bible is really *grape juice*. That seems unlikely to me. If “wine” in the Bible were grape juice, why would the Bible contain so many warnings against it? For example, an elder or overseer in the church, has to meet the following criteria:

*1 Timothy 3:3 (NKJV) not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;*

- i. Greek: *paroinos* – “beside wine”, like “para” legal or “para” medic, so “not someone who is normally next to wine” or “not someone who drinks wine habitually”
  - a) If the Bible were talking about grape juice, would we honestly care how much of it the leaders in the church were drinking?
- ii. The wine they drank had a much lower alcohol content than that which is sold today, which makes the cautions against drinking all the more pointed.

*Proverbs 23:29-35 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?*

*<sup>30</sup> Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine.*

*<sup>31</sup> Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly;*

*<sup>32</sup> At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper.*

*<sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things.*

*<sup>34</sup> Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying:*

*<sup>35</sup> “They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?”*

- C. **Expecting God's Best** Many of us have trouble believing that the Lord might do anything really wonderful in our lives: Answer that prayer, do something supernatural that you can personally see. This story brings out several truths that we should take note of.

## **Faith-Builders:**

- i. **You don't have to understand how God works; you just have to obey Him.** The servants who obeyed Jesus did not know what He was going to do or how He was going to do it. And Jesus didn't take the time to explain it. He just gave orders to fill pots.
  - a) In fact, no one knows how or why miracles happen. If we understood the thing too well, it wouldn't be miraculous and God would not be God.
- ii. **Expect Him to work in unexpected places.** Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding – not a prayer meeting, not a pastors' conference, not a healing service. It was a wedding reception! It was a party! The next time you throw a party, invite Jesus.
- iii. **Expect Him to work at unexpected times.** In v.4 this much is clear: Jesus is not saying to Mary, "Hey mom, perfect timing! I was just going to do something about that." If anything, He sounds like He's not going to do anything at all – and yet He did.
- iv. **Jesus solved a problem.** Do you have problems? Great. You are in the perfect place to see God work. I've never actually checked, but it's possible that every miracle in the Bible begins with a problem.
  - a) This week's example: Boiler off, Dave Oliver arrives. Coincidence? Believe what you want, but we've seen this kind of thing too many times. I'm so accustomed to the presence of unsolvable problems that I now believe they are a normal part of the Christian life – a normal part of walking by faith.
- v. **You don't need much experience as a Christian.** We don't know when the servants who poured the water met Jesus. Maybe just then. At any rate they could not have expected much, because He had just begun His public ministry.
- vi. **You don't need experience in the miraculous.** This was “the beginning of signs” that Jesus did. No one present had ever seen Jesus perform a miracle before.
- vii. **You don't need problems like those other people have.** Is your need special, different, unique? Is that stifling your faith? Think about it. Jesus healed many diseases, cleansed many lepers and cast out many demons, but this is the first and only time we know of that Jesus did this particular thing. Go ahead and pray for something totally new, totally different, totally unique. How do you know God won't do it?

II. 2:13-25      Passover in Jerusalem

A. 2:13-17      Cleansing the Temple

- i. *house of merchandise*      Jesus finds it offensive to profiteer off of people's religious sentiments. If you Google “Christian Merchandise” you can find “useful” items like this:

**Christian Holy Rock from the Jordan River in Olive Wood Box**  
**\$21.95    + \$4.99 shipping      Free shipping on orders over \$50**

- “This is a pebble from the Jordan River, laser engraved. As each pebble is unique, shapes and colors may vary. Unique powers have been attributed to the stone throughout the ages by many religions. Different stones have come to symbolize spirituality, love, success, health and peace. Included is a certificate of origin to ensure their authenticity.”
  - Now if you want special Christian or Jewish jewelry from the same site you can pay a lot more. **One necklace was going for \$1379.00 – a special sale price.** Maybe it's a good deal. I don't know much about jewelry.
- ii. **Application:** You are probably not involved in anything like this. But are there any tables the Lord has to overturn in our lives? Any animals He would drive out? Anything interfering with authentic worship that He needs to get out of the way?

B. 2:18-22 Raising Up the Temple

- i. At Jesus' trial a couple of jokers brought this up as some kind of evidence against Him:

*Matthew 26:59-61 (NKJV) Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’”*

C. 2:23-25 Signs During Passover

- i. Jesus would do no signs for those who asked for them in the previous section, but He did a lot of signs nonetheless. He just refused to impress demanding skeptics.
- ii. 2:23 *many believed ... when they saw the signs* People love to see dramatic signs, but the faith that comes from seeing signs only is usually a weak or shallow faith.
- iii. 2:24 *did not commit Himself to them* Jesus didn't commit Himself, reveal Himself, to these shallow believers. The ones Jesus is closest to need to follow Him with or without the signs – because even when God gives us big signs, He often makes us wait for them. Shallow believers don't stick around and wait, so they won't continue to see God work – and Jesus knows who they are. He knows what is in man. He knows our hearts.
- a) Christ's closest disciples saw more signs than anyone, but also endured more difficulties as their lives went on. That's a real disciple, the one who remains faithful to Jesus no matter what. Be one of those.

Communion Passage:

*1 John 3:16 (NKJV) By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*